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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/195,604	11/19/1998	NABUAKI TOMIDOKORO	0557-4524-2	4501

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EXAMINER

POKRZYWA, JOSEPH R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2622

DATE MAILED: 03/10/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/195,604

Applicant(s)

TOMIDOKORO ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph R. Pokrzywa

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 December 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-29 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 and 30-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's amendment was received on 12/20/02, and has been entered and made of record. Currently, **claims 1-36** are pending, with **claims 8-29** withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Response to Arguments

2. Upon review of the prior art of Ogura (EPO Publication Number EP 0 768 582), which was cited in the Office action dated 9/24/02, as anticipating **claims 1-7, and 30-36**, the examiner finds that the reference can still anticipate the claims, as currently amended.
3. Applicant's arguments filed 12/20/02 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's arguments on pages 4 and 5, which state that the inquiries of Figures 21 and 22 of Ogura are only initiated when either the remote reporting key is pressed or if the self-diagnosis process is started, thereby failing to teach of periodically initiating the process. The examiner notes that the new limitation "through a periodically initiated process" was added each of the independent claims, making claim 1 now recite "to detect a transmission fault from at least one of the central service station and the communication control unit over a predetermined period through a periodically initiated process". After review of Ogura, the examiner finds in column 31, line 47 through column 33, line 9 that the remote reporting processes shown in Figs. 21 and 22, can be inhibited until a period of time measured by a clock

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is reached. Particularly, as read in the paragraph at column 32, lines 34 through 49, the remote reporting data concerning an abnormality is inhibited “until a period of time measured by using the clock 121 reaches the prespecified period of time”. With this, one of ordinary skill in the art can recognize that this feature periodically initiates the process, as required by the current claim.

4. Therefore, the rejection of *claim 1*, as well as *claims 7, 30, and 36*, and the corresponding dependent *claims 2-6, and 31-35*, as cited in the Office action dated 9/24/02, under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), as being anticipated by Ogura, is maintained and repeated in this Office action.

Claim Objections

5. The objection to *claim 7*, as cited in the Office action dated 9/24/02, is overcome by the changes set forth in the amendment.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. **Claims 1-7, and 30-36** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ogura (European Patent Publication Number EP 0 768 582, cited in the Office action dated 9/24/02).

Regarding **claim 1**, Ogura discloses an image forming device management system including a plurality of image forming devices (copying machine PPC 1, seen in Fig. 5), a central service station for providing a maintenance service for the image forming devices (administrating device 16, see Fig. 5), and a communication control unit connected to each of the image forming devices by a signal line (communication control unit 18, seen in Fig. 5), the communication control unit (18) connecting one of the image forming devices (PPC 1) to the central service station (16) by a communication network (public line network 17, column 12, line 25 through column 13, line 12). Further, Ogura teaches that each of the image forming devices (see Fig. 20, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) being configured to detect a transmission fault from at least one of the central service station and the communication control unit (“transmitted normally” or “reported normally?” in Figs. 21 and 22) over a predetermined period (“timer > 3 minutes” in Fig. 21 and “timer > 20 minutes” in Fig. 22) through a periodically initiated process (column 31, line 47 through column 33, line 9, wherein remote reporting data concerning an abnormality is inhibited “until a period of time measured by using the clock 121 reaches the prespecified period of time”, as read in the paragraph at column 32,

lines 34 through 49, thereby being periodically initiated) and to display a signal line separation message (“failure of automatic reporting displayed”) when the image forming device detects the transmission fault from at least one of the central service station and the communication control unit over the predetermined period (see Figs. 21 and 22, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42).

Regarding *claim 2*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 1, and further teaches that each of the image forming devices (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) is configured to detect the transmission fault from the communication control unit over the predetermined period (“reported normally”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a response of the image forming device to a selecting of the communication control unit to the image forming device (“reporting result report received?”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22).

Regarding *claim 3*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 1, and further teaches that each of the image forming devices (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) is configured to detect the transmission fault from the central service station over the predetermined period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20 minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a response of the image forming device to a selecting of the central service station to the image forming device (column 23, lines 3 through 23).

Regarding *claim 4*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 1, and further teaches that each of the image forming devices (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) is configured to detect the transmission fault from the communication control unit over the predetermined period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20

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minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a response of the image forming device to a polling of the communication control unit to the image forming device (column 25, lines 6 through 56).

Regarding **claim 5**, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 1, and further teaches that each of the image forming devices (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) includes a communication interface unit (communication interface unit 109, seen in Fig. 8) having a terminal connected to the communication control unit (see Fig. 8, column 14, lines 46 through 52), and each of the image forming devices is configured to detect the transmission fault from the communication control unit over the predetermined period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20 minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a detected voltage of the terminal of the communication interface unit (column 18, lines 2 through 12).

Regarding **claim 6**, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 1, and further teaches that each of the image forming devices (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) includes a connection detecting circuit (communication interface unit 109 and CPU 100) having an input connected to the communication control unit (see Fig. 8), and each of the image forming devices is configured to detect the transmission fault from the communication control unit over the predetermined period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20 minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on an output of the connection detecting circuit (column 22, line 53 through column 23, line 33).

Regarding **claim 7**, Ogura discloses an image forming device management system including a plurality of image forming devices (copying machine PPC 1, seen in Fig. 5), a central service station for providing a maintenance service for the image forming devices

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(administrating device 16, see Fig. 5), and a communication control unit connected to each of the image forming devices by a signal line (communication control unit 18, seen in Fig. 5), the communication control unit (18) connecting one of the image forming devices (PPC 1) to the central service station (16) by a communication network (public line network 17, column 12, line 25 through column 13, line 12). Further, Ogura teaches that each of the image forming devices (see Fig. 20, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) being configured to detect a transmission fault of the communication control unit (“transmitted normally” or “reported normally?” in Figs. 21 and 22) over a predetermined period (“timer > 3 minutes” in Fig. 21 and “timer > 20 minutes” in Fig. 22) through a periodically initiated process (column 31, line 47 through column 33, line 9, wherein remote reporting data concerning an abnormality is inhibited “until a period of time measured by using the clock 121 reaches the prespecified period of time”, as read in the paragraph at column 32, lines 34 through 49, thereby being periodically initiated) and to display a signal line separation message (“failure of automatic reporting displayed”) when the image forming device detects the transmission fault from the communication control unit over the predetermined period (see Figs. 21 and 22, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42), and wherein the display of the signal line separation message indicates a transmission fault along the signal line between the image forming device and the communication control unit (column 12, lines 1 through 24, and column 23, lines 3 through 23).

Regarding *claim 30*, Ogura discloses an image forming device management system comprising a plurality of means for image forming (copying machine PPC 1, seen in Fig. 5), a maintenance service means provided for the plurality of means for image forming (administrating device 16, see Fig. 5), and a means for communicating and controlling,

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connected to each of the means for image forming by a signal line (communication control unit 18, seen in Fig. 5), the means for communicating and controlling (18) connecting one of the means for image forming (PPC 1) to the maintenance service means (16) by a communication network (public line network 17, column 12, line 25 through column 13, line 12). Further, Ogura teaches that each of the means for image forming (see Fig. 20, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) being configured to detect a transmission fault from at least one of the maintenance service means and the means for communicating and controlling (“transmitted normally” or “reported normally?” in Figs. 21 and 22) over a predetermined period (“timer > 3 minutes” in Fig. 21 and “timer > 20 minutes” in Fig. 22) through a periodically initiated process (column 31, line 47 through column 33, line 9, wherein remote reporting data concerning an abnormality is inhibited “until a period of time measured by using the clock 121 reaches the prespecified period of time”, as read in the paragraph at column 32, lines 34 through 49, thereby being periodically initiated) and to display a signal line separation message (“failure of automatic reporting displayed”) when the means for image forming detects the transmission fault from at least one of the maintenance service means and the means for communicating and controlling over the predetermined period (see Figs. 21 and 22, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42).

Regarding *claim 31*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 30, and further teaches that each of the means for image forming (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) is configured to detect the transmission fault from the means for communicating and controlling over the predetermined period (“reported normally”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a response of the means for image forming to a selecting of the means for communicating and

controlling to the means for image forming (“reporting result report received?”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22).

Regarding *claim 32*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 30, and further teaches that each of the means for image forming (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) is configured to detect the transmission fault from the maintenance service means over the predetermined period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20 minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a response of the means for image forming to a selecting of the maintenance service means to the means for image forming (column 23, lines 3 through 23).

Regarding *claim 33*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 30, and further teaches that each of the means for image forming (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) is configured to detect the transmission fault from the means for communicating and controlling over the predetermined period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20 minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a response of the means for image forming to a polling of the means for communicating and controlling to the means for image forming (column 25, lines 6 through 56).

Regarding *claim 34*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 30, and further teaches that each of the means for image forming (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) includes a communication interface unit (communication interface unit 109, seen in Fig. 8) having a terminal connected to the means for communicating and controlling (see Fig. 8, column 14, lines 46 through 52), and each of the means for image forming is configured to detect the transmission fault from the means for communicating and controlling over the predetermined

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period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20 minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on a detected voltage of the terminal of the communication interface unit (column 18, lines 2 through 12).

Regarding *claim 35*, Ogura discloses the system discussed above in claim 30, and further teaches that each of the means for image forming (column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) includes a connection detecting circuit (communication interface unit 109 and CPU 100) having an input connected to the means for communicating and controlling (see Fig. 8), and each of the means for image forming is configured to detect the transmission fault from the means for communicating and controlling over the predetermined period (“reporting result report received?” and “timer > 3 minutes” or “timer > 20 minutes”, seen in Figs. 21 and 22) based on an output of the connection detecting circuit (column 22, line 53 through column 23, line 33).

Regarding *claim 36*, Ogura discloses a means for image forming management including a plurality of means for image forming (copying machine PPC 1, seen in Fig. 5), a maintenance service means provided for the means for image forming (administrating device 16, see Fig. 5), and a means for communicating and controlling connected to each of the means for image forming by a signal line (communication control unit 18, seen in Fig. 5), the means for communicating and controlling (18) connecting one of the means for image forming (PPC 1) to the maintenance service means (16) by a communication network (public line network 17, column 12, line 25 through column 13, line 12). Further, Ogura teaches that each of the means for image forming (see Fig. 20, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42) being configured to detect a transmission fault from the means for communicating and controlling (“transmitted normally” or “reported normally?” in Figs. 21 and 22) over a predetermined period (“timer > 3

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minutes” in Fig. 21 and “timer > 20 minutes” in Fig. 22) through a periodically initiated process (column 31, line 47 through column 33, line 9, wherein remote reporting data concerning an abnormality is inhibited “until a period of time measured by using the clock 121 reaches the prespecified period of time”, as read in the paragraph at column 32, lines 34 through 49, thereby being periodically initiated) and to display a signal line separation message (“failure of automatic reporting displayed”) when the means for image forming detects the transmission fault from the means for communicating and controlling over the predetermined period (see Figs. 21 and 22, column 22, line 39 through column 23, line 42).

Conclusion

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joe Pokrzywa whose telephone number is (703) 305-0146. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward L. Coles can be reached on (703) 305-4712. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9314 for regular communications and (703) 872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

J. R.
Joseph R. Pokrzywa
Examiner
Art Unit 2622

jrp
February 26, 2003

MaDeLeNe Nguyen

**MADELENE NGUYEN
PATENT EXAMINER**

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